Intervention: School connectedness

Finding: Insufficient evidence to determine effectiveness

Potential partners to undertake the intervention:

☐ Nonprofits or local coalitions   ☐ Businesses or labor
☒ Schools or universities   ☐ Media
☐ Healthcare providers   ☐ Local public health departments
☐ State public health departments   ☐ Policymakers
☐ Hospitals, clinics or managed care organizations ☐ Other:

Background on the intervention:

Schools have always been an important place for interventions to improve student health. Traditional public health approaches include immunization programs, nutrition programs, health and physical education classes, and health services. Yet, these programs do not address a crucial requirement for student health and well-being: the need to feel like one belongs to and is cared for at school. One analysis explored the association between attributes of schools and school connectedness to identify potential ways schools can improve student well-being.

Findings from the systematic reviews:

The systematic review conducted by McNeely, et al., found that classroom management climate, school size, severity of discipline policies, rates of participation in extracurricular activities, and the racial/ethnic makeup of a school were associated with social connectedness within a school setting.

Limitations/comments:

Findings from this paper should be interpreted with caution because, while connectedness within a school is important, it does not automatically translate into greater connectedness in society at large.

References:

McNeely, C, Nonnemaker, J, Blum, R. Promoting school connectedness: evidence from the national longitudinal study of adolescent health. Journal of School Health 2002; 72(4): 138-146.

Evidence-Based Practices for Healthiest Wisconsin 2010 - Developed by the Bureau of Health Information and Policy, Division of Public Health, Department of Health and Family Services, in partnership with the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute (October 2005). Available at:
http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/statehealthplan/practices/